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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3690
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 11 TOKYO 001328

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 06/12/09

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ARTICLES:

(1) Emperor, Empress to lay flowers at Pacific Memorial Cemetery, PKO Monument in Ottawa during visit to Canada, Hawaii

JIJI.COM (Full)
10:04, June 12, 2009

The itinerary for the official visit of the Emperor and the Empress to Canada and Hawaii was reported at the cabinet meeting on the morning of June 12. The imperial couple will offer flowers at the National Peacekeeping Monument in Ottawa honoring UN peacekeeping operations and at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific dedicated to the fallen American soldiers on Oahu Island in Hawaii. They will not visit Pearl Harbor.

The visit will be for 15 days from July 3-17. According to the Imperial Household Agency, the Peacekeeping Monument is in honor of Canadian peacekeeping operations. The names of Canadians who participated in such operations are inscribed on the monument. In Ottawa, the imperial couple will attend a welcome reception hosted by the governor general, where the Emperor will deliver a speech.

(2) Prime minister to replace Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Hatoyama

YOMIURI ONLINE (Full)
13:49, June 12, 2009

Prime Minister Taro Aso met Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Kunio Hatoyama for about 40 minutes at the Prime

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Minister's Office Residence (Kantei) on the morning of June 12 to discuss the appointment of the Japan Post president.

Aso informed Hatoyama that he intended to retain Yoshifumi Nishikawa as Japan Post president with certain conditions.

Since Hatoyama objected to this, the prime minister intends to replace him.

Hatoyama has been strongly opposed to Nishikawa keeping his job. However, he had stated at a news conference on the same day that if asked by the prime minister to resign, he would accept the request. There have been growing calls in the government and ruling parties for an early solution to this problem out of concern over its impact on the next House of Representatives election. Aso and Hatoyama are expected to meet again in the afternoon to settle the issue.

(3) Reappointment of Japan Post president hitting rocky ground; Aso unable to make up mind

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)
June 12, 2009

Prime Minister Taro Aso has been unable to make a decision on whether to reappoint Japan Post Holdings Co. President Yoshifumi Nishikawa. Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Kunio Hatoyama has still called for Nishikawa's resignation hiding behind his authorization authority. However, some in the government and ruling parties are criticizing Hatoyama for his grandstanding. Every time Aso listens to each side's opinion, his view sways back and forth. Although the government and ruling coalition intend to resolve the issue before the planned party-heads debate on June 17, Aso has yet to make up his mind. Therefore, persons around Aso are having difficulties in coordinating views.

According to persons around Aso, the Prime Minister initially decided to resolve the issue by dismissing Hatoyama. Judging that Hatoyama was adamant, Aso has shifted his position to urge Nishikawa to voluntarily step down from his post. Aso reportedly instructed Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura to urge Nishikawa to quit his post.

The Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei) explored how business circles were thinking about the issue, including possible

candidates to succeed Nishikawa. However, former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and other LDP members, who showed Nishikawa special treatment to persuade him to serve as Japan Post president, furiously opposed the idea of replacing Nishikawa. Since Nishikawa has no intention to leave his post, a cautious view would gain ground that if Nishikawa quits, the public would take such as retreat from the government's reform efforts.

The idea of punishing both persons is now emerging. Both Hatoyama and Nishikawa are unlikely to quit their posts. There is also a rumor that Aso would urge Nishikawa to resign and shuffle the cabinet to remove Hatoyama and give him a key post in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Aso has instructed Hatoyama to hold discussion with Kawamura and Finance Minister Kaoru Yosano. Kawamura and Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsuhito Asano called Hatoyama on the night of June 9 to urge him to restrain his remarks. However, Hatoyama expressed his

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annoyance with Kawamura on the phone with a government official on June 10, arguing: "Please tell the Prime Minister that I don't want to be told by the chief cabinet secretary."

For the reason that he supported Aso in the three LDP presidential elections, the emotional strain has made the situation more complicated.

Aso told the press corps yesterday evening: "I haven't made up my mind. I feel that I should put an end to the issue as early as possible." Aso has yet to find any answer to "a very difficult question."

(4) Coalition with SDP poses challenge to DPJ due to gap over foreign and security policies

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Abridged slightly)
June 12, 2009

The Social Democratic Party (SDP) at a meeting of the standing committee on June 11 decided to enter talks on the establishing of a coalition government with the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) after the next Lower House election. The SDP and the DPJ are now faced with a heavy challenge due to differences in their diplomatic and security policies.

The SDP has decided to join coalition talks with the DPJ, because it has determined that it would be advantageous for it to make "change of government" its policy slogan, backed by coalition with the DPJ, which is regaining support ratings with the assumption of Hatoyama as party head. When Secretary General Shigeno at the standing committee meeting asked views of members about participation in the coalition talks, most members voiced a positive view, saying that since people are pinning high hopes on a change of administration, it is advantageous to call for participation in coalition government. President Fukushima, who has been cautious about the idea, told reporters in the Diet building on the afternoon of the 11th, "I want to make a public appeal that the SDP is needed for new politics and to present the big picture of our identity."

The DPJ and the People's New Party (PNP) have already mapped out five proposals as common policies for the next Lower House election: (1) leaving the sales tax unchanged; (2) revision to the postal privatization; (3) abolition of the new medical service system for very old people (for elderly people aged 75 or older); (4) building a safety network to protect employment; and (5) free education for high school students. They are now calling on the SDP to join the coalition talks.

The SDF intends to ask during talks with the DPJ and the PNP to add a policy of relocating U.S. bases in Okinawa outside the prefecture, after accepting those proposals.

DPJ President Hatoyama told reporters at the party headquarters that he welcomes the SDP's decision. He said, "Given the situation in the Upper House, even if the DPJ wins the Lower House election, it will

be impossible for it to form a one-party administration. Forming a coalition government is the most plausible way. We appreciate that the DPJ is trying to make a decision in a positive manner." He also said, "It is necessary to further deepen discussions on such issues as security. It is important to throw away small differences and agree on big similarities."

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(5) Sanctions' true worth to be tested; United Nations may adopt new resolution on North Korea today

NIKKEI (Page 3) (Excerpts)
June 12, 2009

Hiroyuki Nakamae, New York

Following an agreement reached on a draft resolution condemning North Korea's second nuclear test, the five permanent UN Security Council members plus Japan and South Korea are seeking the understanding of other members to hold a plenary session as early as June 11 for the adoption of the resolution. The draft resolution specifies sanctions aiming to increase pressure in terms of money and goods. For the effectiveness of the resolution, attention will be focused on the activities of the Sanctions Committee which is to determine specific financial steps and assets subject to a freeze under the Security Council.

The Sanctions Committee was established in accordance with Resolution 1718, adopted following North Korea's first nuclear test in October 2006. In addition to monitoring the level of implementation of sanctions by each member country, the committee has the authority to identify organizations and individuals subject to sanctions. But the body has not conducted substantial discussions over the last two and a half years.

This time around, the draft resolution includes a plan to strengthen the committee's functions in order to increase the effectiveness of the sanction. The resolution specifically proposes the establishment of a team composed of up to seven experts that is tasked with producing, within 30 days of the resolution's adoption, lists of organizations and individuals subject to the measures specified in the 2006 and new sanctions.

Focus will be on work to determine steps and assets to be frozen in the financial sector, on which the United States and other countries pin high hopes. In putting specific organizations and individuals on the list as connected with weapons of mass destruction (WMD), a certain factor is necessary that is convincing to everyone, according to Japanese Ambassador to UN Yukio Takasu. A UN source also thinks that some countries might be unwilling to disclose classified information. All those elements would make it difficult for the discussion to move forward, and as a result, the Sanctions Committee is expected to be pressed to play a greater role.

Japan has put an embargo on luxury goods and WMD-connected items under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Control Law. Likewise, adjustments will have to be made in accordance with each member country's domestic legislation. Fierce wheeling and dealing is likely to take place over the selection of the members of the expert team.

Participation by China and Russia indispensable

Atsushi Ijuin, senior writer

Less than 40 percent of the UN members reported to the world body on what steps they had taken by last year since the adoption of a UN resolution in response to North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006. Despite condemnation from the international community, the North has

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always had escape routes.

North Korea, which was supposed to be under sanctions, recorded an 18-year high in its trade last year. Without participation by China and Russia who account for 70 percent of North Korea's trade, the new resolution would be ineffective. Controls on the smuggler-infested China-DPRK border will be a challenge as well.

Even if strict sanctions are applied, the North, which has many complicated domestic issues, including the question of determining General Secretary Kim Jong Il's successor, will probably not comply with international demands so easily. There is an observation that the country will launch more missiles and make provocative acts using armed forces. Furthermore, the country might attempt to jolt the international community by using such tools as captured foreigners and economic cooperation.

This can explain why the international cooperative system must be maintained and examined. The United Nations must also follow up its sanctions, major countries concerned should hold talks, and the Japan-U.S. and the U.S.-ROK alliances must be enhanced. All member countries must make ceaseless efforts to keep their ego under control to maintain international unity.

(6) "Seiron" column: Time to prepare for regime change in North Korea

SANKEI (Page 7) (Full)
June 12, 2009

Hiroshi Nakanishi, professor at Kyoto University Graduate School

Domestic factors not the only reason for provocations

North Korea is stepping up its provocative actions. It fired a long-range ballistic missile on April 5, calling this a satellite launch, and conducted its second underground nuclear test on May 25. Moreover, the DPRK has declared that its demarcation agreement with the ROK is now void; it has reportedly built new missile bases; and there are signs of preparations to launch more missiles. It would appear that North Korea's actions have come at a faster pace than those in 2006, when it launched several missiles and conducted its first nuclear test.

Why is North Korea behaving like this right now? Domestic factors have often been cited recently. After General Secretary Kim Jong Il fell ill last summer, his health problem and future successor have quickly emerged as an issue. His three sons (Jong Nam, Jong Chol, and Jong Un) and brother-in-law Chang Song Taek have been mentioned as possible successors, and there are reports claiming that the third son, Jong Un, has been picked as the heir.

However, one needs to have some reservations about such a view. It is almost certain that General Secretary Kim indeed fell ill last year, and it is quite probable that moves relating to the succession process have actually emerged in the DPRK leadership. Such moves are important for the mid- and long-term. However, it is probably not productive to link the DPRK's present provocations with this and that in the internal situation in that country.

At the end of the day, very little is known about how the internal circumstances in North Korea affect its foreign policy. Furthermore,

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while the recent moves have indeed been abrupt, they have been well-managed, and nothing suggests divisions within the DPRK leadership.

Six-Party Talks now hopeless

For now, it is reasonable to think that North Korea's actions were triggered by international factors. Its behavior can be explained with this view.

The Obama administration's policy toward North Korea is probably the basic motive behind the DPRK's behavior. It appears that there had been expectations that the Obama government would be conciliatory when the administration was inaugurated. The joint editorial of

North Korean newspapers on New Year's Day that mentioned the "denuclearization of the Korean peninsula," and contained this passage, "We will develop relations with countries that are friendly with us and actively contribute to achieving the great cause of making the world independent," is probably an indication of such expectations. However, the Obama administration has maintained its position of demanding North Korea's abandonment of its nuclear programs. It can be said that irked by this, the DPRK escalated its provocation from firing a long-range missile "for peaceful purposes" to a nuclear test.

The ROK is another factor. In contrast to the previous Roh Moo Hyun administration, which adopted a conciliatory policy, the Lee Myung Bak administration is leaning toward cooperation with Japan and the U.S. and a policy of applying pressure on the North. The ROK is important for the DPRK more as a shield to keep off Japanese and U.S. pressure than for the economic benefits it brings. With the change in the ROK's posture, the DPRK appears to have heightened tension with the South in an attempt to divide public opinion in the ROK and drive a wedge into the cooperation among Japan, the U.S., and South Korea. It might have regarded the death of former President Roh Moo Hyun as a good opportunity.

North Korea's ultimate goal in its provocations is probably to obtain a guarantee for its political regime through dialogue with the U.S. Under the present situation where Japan, the U.S., and ROK have strengthened their unity, and China and Russia are cooperating to a certain extent, North Korea is unlikely to return to the Six-Party Talks. It is probably pinning more hope on bilateral talks with the U.S.

Japan and the four other Six-Party Talks participants would like North Korea to stop any further provocative actions and return to the talks. How will North Korea react to the UN Security Council's adoption of a sanction resolution against it? It will probably be possible to topple the Kim Jong Il regime if the United States uses military force or if China imposes a complete embargo.

However, since no country is willing and able to take responsibility for the over 20 million North Korean people after that, this is not an option.

Re-listing as terrorism sponsor

It is highly possible that sanctions short of toppling the regime will draw a strong reaction from North Korea, triggering further provocative actions. However, rewarding its blatant violation of international law is out of the question.

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Herein lies the dilemma of the North Korea issue. Yet, certain sanctions will have to be imposed, efforts to communicate with its leadership will have to be made, and venues for dialogue - (with the DPRK's participation) to be rewarded with the lifting of sanctions - will have to be set up. The United States' re-listing of North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism may be useful for this purpose.

Japan has already imposed various sanctions, so it has little leeway to do more. While calling on other nations to impose sanctions, it should deter the DPRK from further provocations and be prepared to respond rapidly to contain the situation if it embarks on illegal acts.

In any event, the DPRK's abandonment of its missiles and nuclear arms and a solution to the abduction issue are unlikely without a regime change in that country - that is, either General Secretary Kim is incapacitated or dies. While this is indeed an annoying fact, nothing can be done about this inasmuch as North Korea is, in effect, a dictatorial dynasty. The day may not be far off. In preparation for this eventuality, the best thing Japan can do right now is to prevent North Korea's provocations from developing into a crisis and create the international environment for dealing with a regime change in the DPRK.

(7) Behind the appointment of the U.S. ambassador to Japan

BUNGEI SHUNJU (Pages 234-235) (Full)
July 2009

There has been a significant decline in the power of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (Current vice minister is Mitoji Yabunaka, who joined the ministry in 1969).

Both the Japanese embassy in the U.S. (under Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki) and the North American Affairs Bureau (under Director General Kazuyoshi Umemoto, MOFA batch of 1977), which is in charge of U.S. relations, were unable to catch the White House's appointment of Silicon Valley lawyer John Roos as U.S. ambassador to Japan in advance. The conclusion from their investigation, mobilizing even former vice minister Shotaro Yachi, that the ambassador is "likely to be an incumbent or former member of Congress" was way off the mark.

Rather than being unable to catch any information, it appears that MOFA had believed in the bylined report by Asahi Shimbun's Washington Bureau chief Yoichi Kato early this year that "Harvard University Professor Joseph Nye is certain to become next ambassador to Japan." In fact, it is said that a senior North American Affairs Bureau official was the source of Mainichi Shimbun's report on April 18 confirming that "U.S. Ambassador to Japan Nye to take up post around summer."

The decline in Japan's ability to gather information on the Obama administration is not limited to MOFA. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (under Vice Minister Harufumi Mochizuki, batch of 1973) also spends a lot of money for information gathering by the New York Office of JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) under its supervision. Yet, this New York Office had been reporting until very late in the process that "Nye's appointment is certain."

This shows how far away the so-called "experts on the U.S." in Japan
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and the so-called "experts on Japan" in the U.S. are now from the center of the Obama administration.

Nye, the original favorite to take up the post, is an advocate of the concept of "soft power," which emphasizes not only military power, but also diplomacy and culture. He is close to former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. While it is true that Secretary Hillary Clinton had led efforts in the State Department to consider Nye's appointment as ambassador to Japan, Japanese media reports were based on the impression of "Japan experts" like Armitage and former National Security Council director for Asia Michael Green. These Japan experts monopolize contacts with Japanese companies and politicians and form a small circle of close acquaintances in a kind of "mutual admiration society." Even after the turnover from a Republican to a Democratic government, theirs is a mechanism to protect mutual interest by dispatching officials on Japanese affairs from their exclusive circle. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia Kurt Campbell is also a member of this inner circle.

Since they do not have any connections with Roos, both the so-called "experts on the U.S." and the "experts on Japan" are dissatisfied, calling his appointment a "downgrade." Yet, these very people are the culprits for the lack of stability in the Japan-U.S. relationship. Perhaps it is time to say goodbye to this inner circle.

(8) An order from Vice Minister Yabunaka

BUNGEISHUNJU (Page 235) (Full)
July, 2009

Another matter that officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) currently complain about is Vice Minister Mitoji Yabunaka's new "order." Just before the Golden Week holidays in May, Yabunaka suddenly ordered the senior officials to translate the concept of "arc of freedom and prosperity" announced by Prime Minister Taro Aso when he was foreign minister into policies by the end of June.

Yabunaka, on his part, made hasty visits to India, Turkey, Slovakia, and the other countries that form the core of this concept during the holidays, dealing with this matter haphazardly all along, which was reportedly criticized by senior bureaucrats. He probably became frantic, having been told by the prime minister, "Can't we use that concept for something?"

Bureau chief class MOFA officials are currently nervous that they may lose their jobs if the Democratic Party of Japan takes over the administration. By convention, Yabunaka's successor should be Kenichiro Sasae (class of 1974), deputy minister for foreign affairs in charge of Diet affairs. However, plans are even being considered to freeze the personnel changes this summer and postpone them to the winter, after the election is held. Since the bureaucrats are so engrossed in self-preservation, they probably have not had time to gather information (on the next U.S. ambassador to Japan).

(9) Mr. Shii makes pro-Obama declaration?

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Almost full)
Evening, June 10, 2009

Takuma Suzuki

TOKYO 00001328 009 OF 011

Japanese Communist Party (JCP) Chairman Kazuo Shii sent a letter to U.S. President Barack Obama, sympathizing with him for declaring in a speech given in Prague that he will seek a world free of nuclear arms. Shii was overjoyed when he received a letter of response from the U.S. government. It was as if he had received a reply to a love letter.

(On the day this reporter visited Shii,) the rain had just stopped, and a red flag was whipping on the roof of the JCP's headquarters building in Yoyogi, Tokyo. I was surprised to find the rooftop covered with fresh green shrubbery all over. There is even a small pond and a small stream. Mr. Shii appears to be proud of them. "It's nice, isn't it? Roses are beautiful. Hydrangeas are colorful." There is a wisteria trellis. I asked him, "How about having a beer garden here?" "That sounds fun. Why don't we do it?"

I knew that the JCP is up and running these days due to the renewed popularity of "Kanikosen" (Crab Processing Ship, a book written by Takiji Kobayashi and published in 1929). It appears to be getting even more of boost from the letter from the Obama administration. It all started with President Obama's speech in Prague on April 5. Encouraged by Obama's enthusiasm about eliminating nuclear arms, Chairman Shii wrote a letter, noting that was deeply impressed by his speech. He visited Charge' d'Affaires ad interim James Zumwalt at the U.S. Embassy in Japan and handed the letter to him. This was the first visit ever to the U.S. Embassy by a representative of the JCP.

"(I visited the U.S. Embassy to hand my letter) because I myself was impressed by the president's speech. I think it was an historic speech. I took note of three remarks he made. First, he for the first time (as the president of the U.S.) categorically said that he would make elimination of nuclear arms a national goal. Second, he for the first time (as the president of the U.S.) spoke of America's moral responsibility for eliminating nuclear arms. He said that the use of atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was an issue that concerns the moral principles of humankind. Third, he called on the world to cooperate. There are many differences in the stances of the JCP and the U.S. government. But because he has taken the first step forward, I want to help him realize his proposal in international politics. I wanted to convey this feeling of mine to the president."

It was a love letter to President Obama, so to speak. Mr. Shii did not expect a response. However, a letter arrived at the party headquarters on May 16. The letter was written by Deputy Assistant Secretary Davis at the order of the president. The letter, which started off with "Dear Mr. Shii," carried a line "I appreciate your enthusiasm." "I was at home at that time. My secretary faxed it to me. To be honest, I was surprised. I felt the sincerity of Mr.

Obama. The letter was short but very polished. I thought he felt my enthusiasm."

"You are saying that we have mutual affection in pursuit of an anti-nuclear and peace policy? Ha, ha, ha. I frankly wrote that I cannot agree with some of the points made in the Prague speech. That is because he said that it would be probably impossible to realize a world free of nuclear arms while he is alive. No countries have ever pursued any talks to eliminate nuclear arms. They have not even called for such. They should be able to tackle it, only if they intend to. I think that it is meaningful that an official channel has been established as a result of such exchanges of letters."

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At any rate, why did Mr. Shii send a letter to President Obama? I do not quite understand that. He could have just issued a statement welcoming his speech. When I was puzzled, Mr. Shii gave me a piece of paper with a bashful look. He said that it is a copy from the complete works of Marks and Engels. Mr. Shii read out some lines from a congratulatory letter Marx had sent to President Lincoln when he was reelected.

"The land where the idea of a great democratic republic was created for the first time... The first human rights declaration was made there. It is the land that gave the first shockwave to revolutions in Europe in the 18th century. Yes, our great predecessor had deep respect to the history of the U.S. Lincoln responded to this letter of Marx. I believe President Obama respects Lincoln. He has repeatedly quoted Lincoln's statements."

I see, Marx is likened to Mr. Shii and Lincoln to President Obama. Mr. Shii followed the secret episode between a communist and a U.S. president. "I do not mean that. However, the Obama administration does not discriminate against or ignore the communist party. I was assured of that from his letter. Now we have a branch bureau of Shimbun Akahata in Washington. We were unable to go to the U.S. for some time after the war just because we were communists. For instance, when our delegation went to Europe via Reykjavik, they were not allowed to go outside the airport. There was such a time."

From a fragment of his conversation, I even felt his sympathy with the U.S., which communists once called "Imperialist U.S." I, therefore, asked to see to what extent he is Americanized. "Do you eat McDonalds?" "Yes, I do." "How about jeans?" "I wore them when I was a student." "Have you been to the Disneyland?" "Yes. When my child was small, we went there together." "Do you like jazz?" "Yes, I do. I was learning the piano when I was a high school student. My teacher told me how to play jazz."

Unexpectedly, he is pro-American, or rather a very ordinary Japanese. "Of course, the party platform stipulates that the U.S. is imperialist." However, it also says that it must be looked at from various perspectives. We will give high scores to it, if a forward-looking change occurs there, reflecting public opinion in the world. True friendship will be created through the principle of equality and impartiality, instead of rule and obedience as was the case in the past. I want to have a Japan-U.S. friendship treaty instead of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. That's my wish." Then, would you like to go to the U.S. and hold talks with President Obama? "We are not discussing such a matter in concrete terms."

Usually you have a date after exchanging love letters. Is it OK for you just to run an ad in the Shimbun Akahata? "Ummm. If there is an appropriate opportunity, I would like to go to the U.S. I want to hear jazz there. I also want to go to Carnegie Hall and the American Ballet Theater." He indicated his strong desire to visit the U.S. He must be trying to have the JCP emerge from being the "absolute opposition party."

"That was a good slogan, but we stopped using it, as somebody said to me how long we intend to remain as an opposition party."

(10) Former POW and families visiting Japan June 14; "Want to hear apology from Prime Minister Aso" for forced labor at his father's mine

MAINICHI (Page 10) (Full)
Evening, June 11, 2009

Yoji Hanaoka

A former Australian Allied prisoner of war who was forced to work at the Yoshikuma Coal Mine (Keisen town, Fukuoka Prefecture) of the former Aso Mining Co. run by Prime Minister Taro Aso's father in World War II, and a family member of a British POW will visit Japan from June 14. This will be the first time for the victims to visit Japan after Aso admitted the use of POWs as workers at the House of Representatives plenary session in January. They are seeking to meet Aso and get an apology from him through concerned officials.

The party visiting Japan consists of former POW Joe Croombs, 88, from Sydney, Australia and his two sons and the son of a British ex-POW who has died. Croombs was a former corporal in the Australian army who surrendered in Singapore in February, 1942. After working at a shipyard in Kobe, he was moved to the detention camp at the Yoshikuma Mine. He claimed that he was made to work 12-hour day or night shifts with no wages paid and was beaten up by the guards.

Croombs sent a letter to Aso in February asking for an apology for the forced labor and compensation for the unjust treatment he received but has not received a reply. He will be visiting Japan for the first time after returning home after the war. He said: "I would like to hear an apology from the Japanese prime minister in person. His recognition of our suffering will be a consolation to myself and my fellow POWs."

The four were invited through funds raised by volunteers in Japan studying the POW issue. They will stay in Japan for a week, visiting the sites of the old coal mines and companies that used forced labor. One of the volunteers, Ken Arimitsu, 58, who works for the secretariat of the volunteer group, says that, "Prime Minister Aso's apology while he is in office will serve to restore his own honor and the honor of Japan."

The Japanese government had denied the use of POWs as forced laborers until the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare released the relevant documents. It was found that the Yoshikuma Mine used 300 Allied POWs and a large number of Koreans as workers. Of the POWs, 197 were Australians and four of them have been found to be still alive.

ZUMWALT